

GOVERNOR'S WATER/WASTEWATER WORKS ADVISORY BOARD

Minutes of the November 13-14, 2012, Meeting, held at the ADEC Environmental Health Lab, 5251 Hinkle Road, Anchorage, Alaska.

Attendees: Mark Buggins, Board Chairman
Mike Pollen, Board Recorder
Jana Littlewood, Board Member
Paul Trissel, Board Member
William Justice, Board Member
Richard Steckel, Board Member
Daniel Hines, Board Member

Absent: Bruce Jones, Board Member

ADEC Staff: Carrie Bohan, ADEC Operations Assistance Program, Manager
Ken Smith, ADEC Operations Assistance Program
Martin Suzuki, ADEC Operations Assistance Program
Galen Heffern, ADEC Operations Assistance Program

November 13 only:

Michelle Bonnet, ADEC Division of Water, Director
Bill Griffith, ADEC Facility Programs, Manager

November 14 only:

William Strutz, Mary Lou Strutz, and Todd Cook, Ohlson
Mountain Mineral Springs Bottling Plant by teleconference
Bernie Stack, Golden Heart Utilities, by teleconference
David Kranich, Northern Utility Services

November 13, 2012, 10:40 AM

A workshop was held to review issues for the November 13-14, 2012, Board meeting. Carrie Bohan, Program Manager of the ADEC Operations Assistance Programs for the Division of Water, provided an introductory greeting.

Michelle Bonnet, the Director of the Division of Water, also provided an introductory greeting to the Board.

November 14, 2011, 8:34 AM

Chairman Mark Buggins called the meeting to order. The agenda for the meeting was accepted as printed in the Board packet.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF DECEMBER 14, 2011 BOARD MEETING

Mike Pollen moved and Paul Trissel seconded the motion to approve the December 14, 2011, meeting. The Board approved the motion by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

No public testimony was provided.

AGENDA ITEMS

Ohlson Mountain Mineral Springs Bottling Plant (PWSID #249150) Alternate Method of System Supervision (AMOSS) Plan: William Strutz, Mary Lou Strutz, and Todd Cook joined the meeting by teleconference. Ken Smith described a request from William and Mary Lou Strutz, owners of the Ohlson Mountain Mineral Springs Bottling Plant, for AMOSS plan approval for the operation of their bottling plant Class 1 water treatment system. Todd Cook, a Level 3 water treatment operator, is proposed as the supervising operator for this system until the owners of the system can obtain level 1 certification. Bill Strutz explained the operational sequence of the treatment process and explained that the chlorine dosing is done manually.

Mark Buggins suggested that the ADEC Operations Assistance Staff be notified when Mr. Cook's oversight is no longer onsite. Mike Pollen moved and Richard Steckel seconded that the plan be approved with Mark's suggested addition. The plan was approved unanimously by the Board. Upon department approval of the AMOSS plan, Ken Smith will send a letter of approval, which will include the added condition that the department is notified once Mr. Cook's oversight is no longer onsite.

Golden Heart Utilities (GHU) Water Treatment Plant AMOSS Plan: Bernie Stack, Operations Manager for GHU, joined the meeting by teleconference. Ken Smith described the request from GHU for AMOSS plan approval, which would allow for a Level 2 operator (Joseph Pascoe) to fill the role of a supervising operator of a secondary shift at the Class 4 GHU Water Treatment Plant. Mr. Pascoe has already passed the level 3 exam and is projected to be eligible to upgrade to level 3 certification pending additional experience and 30 CEUs of education. Mr. Pascoe will have completed the necessary operating experience by May 21, 2013, and is committed to obtaining the additional CEUs by that time. Mr. Stack confirmed that the WTP Foreman and Assistant Foreman would be on call and in town during all times that Mr. Pascoe is on shift, and indicated that another Level 2 operator has been hired since the AMOSS plan was originally submitted.

Dan Hines moved and Paul Trissel seconded that the plan be approved. The Board discussed that the intent of an AMOSS plan is to address situations where the system is out of compliance with the certification requirements, and not to address employee convenience or labor contract issues. The plan was approved unanimously by the Board. Upon department approval of the AMOSS plan, Ken Smith will send an approval letter.

Creekwood Apartments Water Treatment System (PWSID #220154) AMOSS Plan: Northern Utility Services (NUS) has proposed an AMOSS plan for the Creekwood Apartments Water Treatment System in Wasilla. Dave Kranich with NUS attended the meeting to answer questions regarding the proposed plan.

The AMOSS plan was originally proposed for a Class 2 water treatment system based on the drawings and unit process description submitted with the AMOSS plan. The ADEC Drinking Water Program granted approval to construct for this system on September 7, 2012, and provided a letter outlining the conditions required for interim approval to operate on November 8, 2012. Dave Kranich confirmed that an updated plan, stamped by Robert Kranich on August 8, 2012, and submitted to ADEC for plan approval, is an accurate representation of what is being installed. The updated drawings indicate that this treatment facility, as designed, is actually a Class 3 water treatment system. The Board commented on the following issues regarding this system:

1. Any changes to the approved treatment train require plan approval.
2. The onsite monitoring frequency (once per week) seems minimal given the complexity of the system.
3. Questions remain about the remote monitoring and SCADA systems, including methods and schedules for monitoring, alarms, and frequency of calibration of the sensors.
4. Questions remain about how raw water quality changes will be addressed with respect to treatment process changes.

The Board concluded that the AMOSS plan, as submitted, is incomplete, and that the classification of the system should be determined based on final design and installation before the AMOSS plan is resubmitted for approval.

The Board further discussed how system classification determinations enter into ADEC's plan approval process. Staff explained that there is presently no specific point in the plan submittal and approval process where the Operator Certification Program determines the classification of a new or redesigned system. Based in part on the experience with this AMOSS submittal, the Board concurred that there should be a point in plan submittal and approval where system classification is evaluated early enough to help define the operational requirements of a proposed system.

Alternative Method of System Supervision Update: Ken Smith provided an update on the Lower Kuskokwim School District (LKSD) AMOSS plan, which was approved February 17, 2010. A 2012 annual report from Bob Miller, the LKSD AMOSS Supervising Operator in Bethel, was presented. The report shows that LKSD continues their efforts to provide training opportunities for their operators, and has made progress toward getting additional LKSD operators certified at correct levels.

ADEC staff presented a spreadsheet showing the compliance status of the LKSD systems, which shows that they are continuing to make progress on their AMOSS plan. The status of the LKSD water system in the village of Chefornak was discussed and further explained in a letter from LKSD's consulting engineer, Greg Jones, PE, of GV Jones and Associates, Inc. Carrie Bohan added that the Tununak school water system is serving as the primary water source for the community. The Board felt that it was important that this water system be encouraged to come into compliance with the AMOSS plan as soon as practical given this situation.

Richard Steckel moved and Paul Trissel seconded that the LKSD AMOSS plan be approved for another year. The Board approved the motion unanimously.

Department Policy of Raw Water Storage Tanks: Martin Suzuki led a discussion on the current policy of assigning four points to a water system classification for raw water storage. Of particular note is the situation with small, frequently filled raw water storage tanks versus larger, seasonally filled tanks. The Board supported the department policy of recognizing classification points for raw water storage tanks in situations where tanks are filled seasonally for treatment over longer periods of time, as opposed to situations where tanks are smaller and filled on a more regular basis.

System Compliance/Operator Certification Project: Carrie Bohan presented ADEC's draft plans for implementation of a Compliance and Enforcement Strategy. Of particular concern are water and wastewater systems that are chronically out of compliance with the Operator Certification requirements. A point-based system was described to prioritize enforcement efforts. Board feedback was requested. Mike Pollen suggested that the legal authorities for enforcement in both water and wastewater certification compliance enforcement should be clearly documented. After some discussion about the potential impact on water and wastewater systems, the Board expressed their general support for the compliance enforcement strategy.

System Specific Training and Certification: Ken Smith provided an overview of the development of the System Specific Training and Certification (S₂TC) program. No bids were received on an initial request for proposals to develop the training modules needed to support the program. ADEC term contractors were then invited to provide proposals, which resulted in two bids in excess of the \$100,000 budget for this project. A second

request for proposals has been released to the term contract vendors with a more limited scope of work.

Board input for the following specific elements of the program was requested:

- 1) Should an operator seeking Level 2 certification be required to already have a Level 1 certificate? After some discussion, the Board felt that this should not be a requirement since the goal is to demonstrate an acceptable level of competency for that specific system component (module) at the necessary level.
- 2) Two math modules are proposed in the set of 20 unit process modules. An option to “test out” of the math modules by passing a math exam was posed to the Board. The general consensus was that the operators should be able to demonstrate competency in passing at least one of the two math modules.
- 3) The Board discussed several options for scoring exams and determining what a passing score would be. It was generally agreed that it would be useful to see what the training modules and exams look like before deciding a best approach for this.

Generic AMOSS Plan Approval: Ken Smith presented draft guidelines for a guidance document for preparing generic AMOSS plans for systems with operators who were certified at one level below the required levels. Two plans were presented, one for primary operating shifts, and another for secondary shift operating shifts. In both cases, the operators would have passed the next higher level exam and would be required to have at least 6 months of operating experience with the system proposing the AMOSS plan. Also, a minimum of 22.5 CEUs per year of training would be required for operators needing to meet the educational requirements for the next level of certification. The Department could approve a properly prepared generic AMOSS plan and the Board be notified of that approval.

Richard Steckel moved and Paul Trissel seconded that the plan be approved. The Board discussed that the intent of generic AMOSS plan approval is to address a situation where the operation is out of compliance with the certification requirements, but should not be used to address employee convenience or labor contract issues. The motion was approved unanimously.

Department Update: Carrie Bohan provided an update on the Operator Assistance Program budget. Galen Heffern and Martin Suzuki provided updates on the following program activities:

- a. **Small Water/Wastewater System Operator Reimbursement Program** – Funding for the wastewater reimbursement program ended June 30, 2012, and funding for the water operator reimbursement program will end on June 30, 2013.
- b. **Exam Results** – Martin presented the exam results through November 8, 2012.
- c. **ABC Exam Update** – Galen provided an update on changes to the ABC exams. Alaska will be converting to the standardized ABC exams with new formula sheets and national standardized questions.
- d. **Small Treated Exam Update** – Carrie provided an update on the small treated exams prepared by ADEC. The exam database was compromised during a recent exam cycle and the exam question set will have to be redone.
- e. **Contracts Update** – Galen provided an update on the status of six current training contracts underway this fiscal year.
- f. **Exam Exit Surveys** – Galen reported on approximately 100 exam exit surveys completed this year. The results were somewhat inconclusive so a revised survey is being prepared.
- g. **ADEC Operations Assistance Facebook Site** – Like!

OTHER BUSINESS

It was moved and approved that the meeting be adjourned at 12:42 PM.